

segments of the other digits are not shown. The head of the femur comes up against a bone which undoubtedly belongs to the pelvis. Where the head of the femur touches it this bone is thick and solid; further behind it appears to have been a very slender, slightly curved rod. On the ventral surface of the animal, immediately in front of the sacral region, I find a quadrate patch of granulations, which seem to represent the impression of some bone pitted like those of the head. This may indicate a broad pubis or it may be produced by the bony armor of the skin in that region. Elsewhere I find numerous evidences of the existence of dermal defenses. None of these probably belonged to the upper region of the body. They apparently consisted of small bony plates which were arranged in rows. These began at or near the midline below and swept outward and backward to the sides. In one place I find ten of these rows in a width of two millimetres.

As to the relationship of this animal, it seems to me that while there are many structures yet unknown, such as the arrangement of the bones and teeth of the roof of the mouth, the sternal apparatus, and the condition of the vertebræ, it is closer to such forms as *Hylonomus* than to *Branchiosaurus*. The form of the head is different from *Branchiosaurus*; likewise the ribs and the limb bones.

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## NATIVE TRIBES OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

BY R. H. MATHEWS, L.S.

(Read March 16, 1900.)

Western Australia contains an estimated area of 978,299 square miles, or, inclusive of the contiguous islands, about 1,057,250 square miles, being about eight times the size of Great Britain. It is the largest of all the colonies of Australia, containing more than a third of the entire area of that continent. In the southwest coastal districts there is much land suitable for farming operations, and farther north there are extensive grassy downs, capable of depasturing immense numbers of sheep and cattle. Considerable areas are gold-producing, chief among which may be mentioned Coolgardie, Cue, Marble Bar and Kimberley—comparable in extent to some prominent European kingdoms. By far the greater portion of the colony, however, consists of vast arid tracts of sand and scrub, which is practically a desert.

In the present preliminary paper it is intended to give a brief outline of the social organization, rites and customs of the native tribes sparsely distributed over the whole of that portion of western Australia lying to the north of the twenty-eighth parallel of south latitude. Compared to the size of the territory occupied the number of the aboriginal inhabitants is insignificant.

On the Murchison, Greenough, Sanford, Roderick, Wooramel, Gascoyne and Lyons rivers the several native tribes are each divided into four sections, called Buljerry, Kiemarra, Boorong and Boogarloo. The intermarriage of these divisions, and the sections to which the resulting offspring belong, will be readily understood when arranged in tabular form, as under :

<i>Husband.</i>	<i>Wife.</i>	<i>Offspring.</i>
Buljerry	Boorong	Boogarloo
Kiemarra	Boogarloo	Boorong
Boorong	Buljerry	Kiemarra
Boogarloo	Kiemarra	Buljerry

These sectional names, with some modifications, are found among the natives at Weld Spring, Bonython Creek, Lake Throssell, Elder Creek, Glen Cumming, and extend eastward into South Australia, where a similar organization exists among the Andikarina and Arrinda tribes, particularized by me in previous publications.

If we travel northward from the Murchison, Gascoyne and other streams above mentioned, we discover that the tribes occupying the Ashburton, Fortescue, Yule, Shaw, De Grey and Oakover rivers are likewise divided into four sections, the names of which are Butcharrie, Kurrimurra, Burronga and Banaka, being simply variations of the nomenclature tabulated in this paper, Banaka taking the place of Boogarloo. These sections reach easterly into the northern territory of South Australia.

Proceeding still farther to the northward from the Oakover to the Fitzroy river, the four sections are known as Baljarra, Boorungo, Kimbera and Bannicka, the men of one section marrying the women of another in a certain fixed rotation. In all the tribes referred to in this paper there are aggregates of totems attached to each section or pair of sections, and descent of the children is counted through the mothers.

In the northeastern corner of western Australia, comprising the region watered by the Ord River and its tributaries, Sturt Creek, Margaret river and the Upper Fitzroy, are a number of native tribes; particulars of whose divisions and the limits of their territory are described in papers which I have communicated to different learned societies.

In all the country dealt with in the present article, with the exception of a strip along the western coast from about Geraldton to Onslow, all the youths are circumcised. Some time after their recovery they must submit to a further mutilation, consisting of splitting open the urethral canal from a point a little way from the scrotum almost to the glans, but leaving the latter intact, the incision being about two inches in length. In some tribes the glans is also split, the cut being carried right into the urinary orifice. After a man recovers from the effects of splitting the penis he is allotted a boy who has not yet been operated upon. This youth is a brother of the woman whom the man is entitled to claim as his wife. The boy is used for purposes of masturbation and sodomy, and constantly accompanies the man.

The natives who inhabit the barren desert country are much inferior to the coast tribes, both in personal appearance and in their weapons and utensils. Their mode of camping at night during the cold months of the winter is as follows: They scoop out a circular depression in the sand, about eighteen inches deep, the diameter varying with the number of individuals who are to use it. In this depression they light a fire, and gradually replace the sand they have scooped out until it is all sufficiently heated. At bedtime each person scrapes a trench in the warm sand and lies down without any clothing, letting the loose sand fall in around his body, except the face. A man, with his wives and children, would perhaps occupy one of these sleeping places, several young men another, some unmarried or old women another, and so on. It not unfrequently happens that pebbles are mixed with the sand, and these retain the heat for a longer time. Although not sufficiently hot to burn the skin of the sleepers, yet on lying against a person's body for a long time they raise blisters, which sometimes become sores, especially on the tender skin of children. No fire is kept alight during the night, but on emerging from their lairs in the morning fires are lit to cook any animal food they may have on hand.